



# News Release

National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 9, 2020

### National Guard Response to COVID-19

This morning, nearly 29,400 Air and Army National Guard professionals are supporting the COVID-19 response at the direction of their governors.

To date, 21 states, three territories and the District of Columbia have been approved for use of federal funds for state missions under Title 32, with another 20 requests moving through the approval process.

“It’s important to acknowledge our Guard soldiers and airmen who continue to work as doctors, nurses and first responders in their communities. They, too, are serving on the front lines of this response – only in their civilian uniforms,” said Gen. Joseph Lengyel, chief, National Guard Bureau.

Such is the case for medical professionals of the South Carolina National Guard who are helping the state increase available hospital beds to accommodate a potential surge in COVID-19 patients.

“As of today (April 6), we have 5,944 hospital beds available in South Carolina,” said Army Maj. Gen. Van McCarty, South Carolina adjutant general. “What our plan allows us to do is to add an additional 3,000 beds, to bring us to approximately 9,000 beds, no later than May 5.”

An additional 1,500 beds would be available by April 28, with the other 1,500 beds in place by May 5, if needed.



Delaware National Guard Citizen-Airmen and medical staff from Nemours/Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children, Christiana Care, and St. Francis Healthcare check vital signs during a training exercise at an alternate care site at A.I. DuPont Hospital, Wilmington in early April. Adults who do not have COVID-19 will be treated at the facility if hospitals reach capacity. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Katherine Miller)

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/2141554/sc-national-guard-helps-search-for-alternate-care-sites/>

Also, Delaware National Guard airmen and soldiers helped set up a new 38-bed field hospital – the first alternative acute care site in Delaware – to prepare for the COVID-19 pandemic.

The team set up the temporary care site in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Delaware Emergency Management Agency.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/2143370/delaware-national-guard-helps-set-up-alternate-care-site/>

Current National Guard COVID-19 response missions include, but are not limited to:

Full-time, 24-hour state Emergency Operations Center staffing to synchronize National Guard efforts with local and state mission partners to plan and execute an effective response;

- Flying ventilators and other critical equipment to support response efforts in other states;
- Providing mortuary affairs assistance as needed with dignity and respect;
- Conducting force health protection assessments to ensure our Guardsmen are taken care of;
- Manufacturing, sewing and distributing masks for mission essential personnel;
- Building and outfitting alternate care facilities to alleviate stress on medical infrastructure;
- Supporting warehouse operations and logistics efforts to help deliver and distribute lifesaving medical equipment and critical supplies;
- Delivering and distributing food in hard-hit communities and supporting food banks;
- Manning call centers to be a knowledgeable and calming voice;
- Providing vital personal protective equipment training and delivery to civilian first responders;
- Performing sample collection and delivery to medical personnel;
- Providing support and symptoms screening to testing facilities and passenger terminals;
- Providing transportation and assessment support to healthcare providers

The National Guard Bureau facilitates integration and synchronization of National Guard support to civil authorities and associated planning between states, the Department of Defense and federal partners.

The National Guard's Coordination Center is a 24 / 7 operation working at increased capacity in anticipation of COVID-19 requirements and to ensure unified and rapid response efforts between its state and federal partners.

The National Guards of the 50 states, three territories and the District of Colombia have a very deep bench of nearly 450,000 experienced and proven Air and Army National Guard professionals. Guard units frequently train side-by-side with state and local emergency responders, making them well-suited for domestic operations.

National Guard members work and live in every community across the nation and have a proven track record of success supporting civilian authorities after homeland emergencies. The National Guard has unique capabilities such as its Civil Support Teams that could provide local first responders with additional resources to combat COVID-19.

For information regarding this press release, please send an email to the National Guard Bureau Media Operations desk at [ng.ncr.ngb-arng.mesg.ngb-media-desk-owner@mail.mil](mailto:ng.ncr.ngb-arng.mesg.ngb-media-desk-owner@mail.mil).

### **National Guard COVID-19 Response Efforts and State PAO Contact Information:**

State priorities continue to focus on supporting community-based testing sites, creating additional medical capacity, and providing logistical support to include transportation and distribution of medical supplies and food.

The depth and breadth of knowledge and skills the National Guard brings to the COVID-19 fight is making a difference in the communities they serve; it is truly neighbors helping neighbors.

#### **Arkansas:**

The Arkansas National Guard has 72 soldiers and airmen working in support of state authorities in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Operating two separate call centers at the Arkansas Department of Health, the lead agency in this crisis, taking calls from concerned citizens and connecting physicians directly with other medical providers at the Department of Health. They are fielding more than 650 calls per day.
- Supporting screening and testing patients for COVID-19 at the drive-through site is the primary missions of our Soldiers and Airmen medical personnel at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences drive-through testing center in Little Rock, which allows UAMS emergency room nurses and staff to tend to the emergency room. They are screening and testing more than 100 patients per day.
- Assisting the Arkansas Department of Health with medical, logistics, and communications planning and analysis, as well as liaisons with the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management and staff at the Emergency Operations Center, Joint Information Center, and Joint Operations Center.
- Receiving and distributing personal protective equipment and other medical supplies, from a centralized warehouse, to designated healthcare facilities throughout the state. More than 36 pallets of supplies have been processed so far, and more shipments are expected to arrive over the weekend.

For more information on Arkansas National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Maj. Brian Mason at [brian.l.mason2.mil@mail.mil](mailto:brian.l.mason2.mil@mail.mil), 501-212-5020, or the Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.ar.ararng.mbx.daily-guard@mail.mil](mailto:ng.ar.ararng.mbx.daily-guard@mail.mil).

#### **California:**

Airmen from the California Air National Guard are transporting 500 state-owned ventilators and medical supplies from California to states in need, including New York.

For more information on California National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Lt. Col. Jonathan Shiroma at [jonathan.m.shiroma.mil@mail.mil](mailto:jonathan.m.shiroma.mil@mail.mil), or 916-854-3391.

### **Colorado:**

Colorado National Guard members are assisting the city and county of Denver in sheltering people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 outbreak.

For more information on Colorado National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Elena O'Bryan at [elena.k.obryan.civ@mail.mil](mailto:elena.k.obryan.civ@mail.mil), 720-250-1051, or the Colorado National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.co.coarng.list.militarysupport@mail.mil](mailto:ng.co.coarng.list.militarysupport@mail.mil).

### **Georgia:**

Currently more than 600 service members of the Georgia National Guard are supporting Coronavirus response missions across the state. The soldiers, airmen, and State Defense Force volunteers are supporting medical assistance teams, foodbank operations, isolation facilities and staffing the Georgia Emergency Management Agency's State Operations Center in Atlanta.

In a relatively-new effort, the GANG is partnering with the Georgia Department of Public Health, the Georgia Department of Community Health, and the Georgia Healthcare Association to send infection control teams to nursing homes around the state.

For more information on Georgia National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Lt. Col. Patrick Watson at [ray.p.watson.mil.mil@mail.mil](mailto:ray.p.watson.mil.mil@mail.mil), or 678-569-3957.

### **Hawaii:**

Hawaii Army National Guard soldiers screen arrivals at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, in Honolulu in support for the COVID-19 pandemic response.

For more information on Hawaii National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Maj. Jeff Hickman at [jeffrey.d.hickman@hawaii.gov](mailto:jeffrey.d.hickman@hawaii.gov), or 808-733-4258.

### **Massachusetts:**

The Massachusetts National Guard is delivering PPE to first responders and hospitals throughout the state and providing staff augmentation and meal delivery to the Holyoke Soldiers Home.

For more information on Massachusetts National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Lt. Col. Lisa Ahaesy at [lisa.m.ahaesy.mil@mail.mil](mailto:lisa.m.ahaesy.mil@mail.mil), 339-202-3950, or the Massachusetts National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.ma.maarng.mbx.paoma@mail.mil](mailto:ng.ma.maarng.mbx.paoma@mail.mil).

## **New York:**

The New York National Guard has 3,400 personnel on mission across the state. Six Joint Task Forces are operating on Long Island, New York City, the Hudson Valley, Capital Region, Syracuse and Buffalo to support state and local governments.

Pararescue Airmen, who are trained as emergency medical technicians, from the New York Air National Guard's 106th Rescue Wing, are also assisting in city hospitals. Additionally, NYNG members continue to manage the Javits site as the unified command post for the multi-agency response.

On April 8, 100 ventilators were delivered to the state stockpile for future distribution. Another 100, part of the federal stockpile, were brought to New York from California.

Other key missions by NYNG personnel include:

- The New York National Guard is also supporting the alternate care facility at the South Beach Psychiatric Center on Staten Island.
- The New York National Guard continues support at nine drive-thru testing sites, supporting more than 6,500 tests yesterday.
- National Guard personnel continue food packaging and distribution, with more than 520,000 meals distributed to date.
- New York Soldiers and Airmen are conducting logistics missions, including warehousing and commodity distribution of medical supplies.
- Hand sanitizer warehousing and deliveries continue, with more than 30,000 gallons of hand sanitizer delivered to local governments.
- The National Guard continues to provide logistics support to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of New York City, assisting in the dignified removal of human remains when required.
- Soldiers continue packaging COVID-19 test kits for the New York State Department of Health, they have assembled about 41,100 kits for distribution across the state.
- NYNG members continue to provide support to the New York State Coronavirus Hotline, speaking with more than 5,000 callers on average a day.

For more information on New York National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Col. Richard Goldenberg at [Richard.l.goldenberg.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Richard.l.goldenberg.mil@mail.mil), or 518-786-6150.

## **Pennsylvania:**

Nearly 850 Pennsylvania National Guard members are involved in supporting the state's response to COVID-19. Some are actively conducting missions while others are preparing in anticipation of additional tasks with our state and federal agency partners.

The PNG continues: supporting the community testing site in Montgomery County and the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank; assembling 3,000 boxed meals a day which are distributed to local families in need; and planning with our state partner agencies. To date, the PNG has assisted in: returning quarantined cruise ship passengers to their Pennsylvania homes; providing logistical support to the Department of Health; supporting the setup of a FEMA Medical Station in Glen Mills, Delaware County; and transporting cots from Norristown State Hospital to the FEMA Field Hospital.

For more information on Pennsylvania National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Lt. Col. Keith Hickox at [keith.w.hickox.mil@mail.mil](mailto:keith.w.hickox.mil@mail.mil), 717-861-6254, or the Pennsylvania National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [RA-MVPUBLICAFFAIRS@pa.gov](mailto:RA-MVPUBLICAFFAIRS@pa.gov).

### **South Carolina:**

The South Carolina National Guard is building testing sites and erecting tents for patient triage.

For more information on South Carolina National Guard activities, please contact the state PAO Lt. Col. Cindi King at [cynthia.m.king4.mil@mail.mil](mailto:cynthia.m.king4.mil@mail.mil), or 803-299-4327.

### **West Virginia:**

Nearly 540 members of the West Virginia National Guard are serving the state through four lines of effort: operationalizing of the event, stabilizing the population, providing logistical movement of critical supplies and conducting data analysis to combat the virus.

Nineteen members of the WVNG are currently assisting Workforce West Virginia and have been receiving training to process unemployment claims to address the backlog of applications. By next week, our service members will be fully trained and able to process those claims. More personnel will be added to assist with answering calls to meet increasing demands for assistance.

Guardsmen continue to ramp up efforts to provide training to local retail establishments on proper cargo, box handling and PPE wear in an effort to flatten the curve of COVID-19 spread. So far, this task force has trained 125 stores and 523 personnel while also assisting with COVID-19 drive through testing lanes in Huntington, Grafton, Weston and Brooke County starting today. Drive through testing support will expand to include Wyoming and Mingo counties later this week and Hampshire County next week.

The WVNG mission of supporting the most vulnerable populations in the state continues to make an impact and in the last 24 hours we packed 423 family boxes at the Facing Hunger Food Bank in Huntington and 1,363 meals at the Mountaineer Food Bank. We are adding an additional five WVNG service members to assist with increasing demand at the Gassaway location later this week. Our refrigerated trucks assisted with the delivery of meals to Mason and Wood Counties yesterday totaling 1,490 meals. To date, WVNG personnel have assisted in packing and distributing nearly 60,000 meals to those in need in the Mountain State.

The logistics team is continuing to provide assistance at St. Francis Hospital, alongside personnel from FEMA Region III, in the conversion of space to support COVID-19 patients while also receiving 5,080 goggles, 5,970 N95 masks, 3,300 gloves, 600 gowns and 105 face shields. The team also distributed hand sanitizer to Jefferson and Nicholas Counties and Cabell-Huntington Hospital.

For more information on West Virginia National Guard activities, please contact the WVNG state PAO Capt. Holli Nelson at [holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil](mailto:holli.r.nelson.mil@mail.mil), 304-561-6762, or the West Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Office email at [ng.wv.wvarng.mbx.public-affairs@mail.mil](mailto:ng.wv.wvarng.mbx.public-affairs@mail.mil).